

Public Utility Commission of Texas

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News Release
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PUC urges Riverway customers to shop Provider of Last Resort rates can be significantly higher

The Public Utility Commission (PUC) urges customers of Sure Electric, LLC, also known as Riverway Power Company, to shop for a new provider as the Electric Reliability Council of Texas (ERCOT) begins the process to switch Riverway customers to a Provider of Last Resort (POLR).

ERCOT is beginning the switching process for approximately 6,200 customers on Tuesday and expects to finish most of it by Friday, June 13. Customers being switched should receive a notice from Riverway and their new POLR. Any customer who receives notice that they are on a POLR rate should read the notice immediately and carefully, then contact that REP or shop for other REPs to enroll in a another plan. POLR providers can offer customers rates that are more attractive than the POLR rates.

Even before receiving a notice, POLR customers can access www.powertochoose.org or call toll-free 1-866-PWR-4-TEX (1-866-797-4839) for a list of providers and their rate offers. POLR customers can also ask the REP providing their POLR service for other available plans.

It is important that POLR customers understand the need to find a lower-cost offer as soon as possible. Rapidly rising energy prices have created the potential for POLR rates to be significantly higher than current competitive electricity rates. REPs have the ability to expedite a switch from POLR if the customer agrees to waive notification requirements. This may involve an additional fee, but if a lower rate is available, then paying the fee will probably be more economical.

POLR service is designed as a temporary safety net assuring continuous electric service if a REP leaves the market and customer accounts are not sold or transferred to a competitor. POLR service is relatively high-priced due to planning costs and uncertainty at a given time in the number of customers and electricity load.

The PUC requires that REPs return any unused portion of a deposit to a switched customer within seven calendar days after a meter read. A POLR can require a deposit, but a deposit cannot be an original condition to receive POLR service.

A POLR is required to offer call center facilities for customer inquiries. POLRs also must give low-income customers the same benefits as all other REPs.

PUC staff intends to seek prompt revocation of Riverway's REP certification.

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